2: Musters T-S (1869-1870)1873
SHS Tehuelche SHS

horse, and had returned; and that the party were marching as fast as they could to overtake Casimiro. He had been detached, partly to hunt and partly to find us. In reply to my inquiries about Arica, he assured me that he was all right, and as there seemed no reason for disbelieving the statement we speedily rode back to the party, and rejoined them on the march, being received with shouts of laughter from the ladies; but as Arica was nowhere to be seen, I expressed my determination to ride back in search of him. This, however, they would not allow, but despatched a mounted Indian and spare horse to bring him in, and a good piece of meat for his refreshment. We then proceeded at a brisk rate, and by nightfall reached the camp. Orkeke at first seemed rather to resent my having started off alone, as if it argued a want of confidence in him; but his delight at having recovered his horse assisted him to recover his good humour. Mr. Clarke had sent me by him some powder, which he said he had lost, and some articles, such as linen and tobacco, and my presenting them all to him quite did away with any traces of ill-feeling.

62] The several detachments were all now reunited, and the party mustered altogether, besides the Chilians and myself, eighteen able-bodied Tehuelche or Patagonian men, with a proportionate number of women and children. The most important among the Indians were Orkeke, the actual cacique, and his brother Tankelow, who possessed the greater number of horses; Casimiro, whose leadership was still rather *in posse;* Camillo, Crimé, Cuastro, Cayuke, &c. One more must be mentioned by name, Wáki; a perfect Hercules in bodily frame, and a thoroughly good-natured fellow, with whom I became great friends. Of all these men, who were in the camp by the Rio Chico on August 15, but eight survived to reach the Rio Negro in the following May; the rest had, at one time or another, been killed or had died. The secret feuds which were before long to endanger the safety of us all, were as yet concealed, and all appeared

[65]

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

volcanic aspect, was named 'Oerroè.' The side of this hill was thickly scattered with fragments of the vesicular lava which furnishes the favourite material for the hand bolas. As most of us had exchanged our weapons of the chase for apples, piñones, &c., in Las Manzanas, many were soon employed picking stones and fashioning bolas. I took very good care that my page should be unprovided with hunting implements, but, alas! here he fell sick, or pretended to be, and was just as useless as before. The day after our arrival Crimè's sufferings were terminated. I received a summons to his death-bed; the cacique, though wandering, knew his friends, and called all to witness that his death had been caused by a Southern Tehuelche whom he named and described, and then, raising his arm, pointed to a vacant space and cried, 'Look at him, there he stands.' He then asked me to 'feel his arm,' and as, to please him, I laid my finger on his pulse, it beat slower and slower, till, with a sudden gasp, he died. According to etiquette, we silently retired, and the toldo resounded with the clamorous crying of the women and the wailing of his widow. The usual funeral rites were hurriedly gone through, but most were too absorbed in their own troubles to participate in them. During the night three children died, and more were at death's door; and, the supply of horseflesh from the funeral victims being abundant, all thoughts of marching were abandoned, and the camp resounded with the lamentations of the women. In our toldo all the inmates were sick, and the duty of looking after the horses devolved on myself and Casimiro, who was recovering from his attack.

We were joined in this place by Hinchel's son with his Araucanian wife, with whom another man came to look for a girl who had run away from Foyel's toldo, but his quest proved fruitless, as she remained invisible, stowed away in some of the toldos. This man brought further news that Cheoeque's people, renewing the old feud, were arming to fight now that we had gone; also that a man had been killed in a

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

000 it better on the whole to keep friends for the present. The
648 evening of this quarrel, as a party of three toldos were starting off to go to the Chupat, and Casimiro was desirous of extending his fame to the Welsh settlement, I wrote a letter to the authorities inquiring about some saddles, part of his Argentine rations sent thither by mistake, which the chief declared to have been intended for him, but which had been distributed amongst other Indians. The letter was forwarded
144 by one of the Indians who was supposed to be of English parentage on one side, although he showed but little traces of English blood in his type, with the exception perhaps of his hair, which was of a lighter colour than that usually met with: he was a very good-natured fellow, and I regretted his departure, as he was one of my adherents, but being a man of very sober habits he did not wish to be mixed up in the universal orgie which would probably take place on arriving
000 in the vicinity of Patagones. With this party the young widow, who had made overtures of marriage to me, also departed, after an affectionate farewell, and receiving a handkerchief as a remembrance. The following morning we also started, and one of the universal loafers who had gambled his property away, asking for a mount, was told to catch the 'white horse' presented by Orkeke: he accordingly borrowed a horse to catch him, and at the end of our day's journey had not succeeded in doing more than driving him in, to use a nautical term, in our wake; this was exactly what I had intended, as this Indian was a great rogue, and had cheated me at cards out of a set of metal bolas, equivalent to a horse.
133 Our march lay up the valley, and the circle was formed on the surrounding volcanic hills, the sides of which, besides the vesicular lava, presented large masses of the ironstone noted as having been observed at Santa Cruz. Shrubs were sparsely scattered on these hills, and game was exceedingly scarce.
165 Towards evening we encamped on the borders of a stream
764 in a place called by the Indians Telck. There the sickness broke out afresh in its worst form, and several children died,

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

in consequence of which a quantity of mares and horses were slaughtered, and numbers of ponchos, ornaments, and other property burnt by the parents in their grief. It was most distressing to see and hear the melancholy manifestations of sorrow, and the sound alone of that dreadful crying aloud, and the dismal 'ullagoning,' to use the Irish expression, of the old women, haunted me even in my sleep. The night of our arrival a mock combat with the Gualichu took place, in which everybody joined. After dark, when many were sitting by the firesides conversing, and I myself was reclining on my bed smoking, the doctor came into the toldo, and communicated with the chief, who told all to get their arms ready, and loaded his gun: on a shout being set up all fires were immediately extinguished, and all commenced firing off guns, clashing their swords, and beating the backs of the toldos, and yelling 'kow-w-l' at each blow; fire-brands being, at the same time, thrown into the air by the women, with clamorous shouts and cries. The scene was wild and striking, the darkness of the night being only illuminated by the flashes of the guns or the sparks from the brands whirled high into the air. At a given signal all stopped simultaneously, and for two or three minutes the camp remained in perfect darkness, after which the fires were relighted, and things resumed their ordinary aspect.

The following day, strange to say, a real fight took place, in which one man was wounded, and for a few minutes a general *mêlée* or free fight appeared imminent. Parties were already forming to cancel old blood feuds, when further mischief was checked by the return of Hinchel, myself, and others. We had been absent trying new horses on the race-course, which, as in almost all the camping-grounds since leaving the Rio Sengel, was a regular beaten level track of about a couple of miles in length, and my new horse had established his fame as a racer by winning a match over a distance of a mile and a half; meanwhile the quarrel broke out—such are the uncertainties of Indian life.

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

203 be peaceable at Patagones, and a rumour was current that Commandante Murga was about to give up his governorship. Casimiro, on receiving all this intelligence, immediately wished a despatch to be indited, although I pointed out to him that it would be better to wait until we had arrived at a nearer point; he was so urgent that on the following morning I composed an elaborate letter, detailing the union of the tribes, the precautions taken for protecting Patagones, and requesting a hundred mares for Casimiro and his people: when finished it was carefully wrapped up and stowed away in my baggage till wanted.

202 The talk then naturally turned on the subject of the choice of messengers to be despatched to Patagones on our arrival at Margensho. It had been previously arranged that I should be sent fully commissioned, as being better able to represent to the authorities what had been resolved on, as well as to impress upon them the immediate requirements of the Indians, and several others now volunteered to accompany me, and got quite merry at the thoughts of a drink. But we were still three marches distant from Margensho. The following
133 day we were again *en route*, traversing a succession of plains with rocky ridges cropping up at intervals, until we at length reached a grassy valley enclosed by steep walls of rocks sixty feet high; gravely perched on the summits of
[136] which several slate-coloured Chilian eagles were visible, their occupation being to prevent the excessive multiplication of little cavies. On the hill sides bordering this valley, our old friend the incense bush, which had for many marches back been very scarce, grew in luxuriant profusion. At this
[272] season it was covered with berries which, though uneatable, are used by the Indians mixed up with water as a drink; this infusion has a very sweet taste, but I should think must be very unwholesome. On arriving at the encamp-
165 ment, at the head of the valley, near some pools of standing water, we were apprised, by the lugubrious sounds of the women's monotonous chants, that the number of the children

2: Musters T-5 (1869-1870)1873
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

had been further diminished by several deaths. One of this day's victims to the epidemic being Algo, Tankelow's youngest daughter, the father was in great distress and anger, as he attributed the death not to the distemper, but to witchcraft.

The warm and tolerably fine weather experienced since our departure from Telek had been succeeded by a heavy, murky, still atmosphere, and the clouded sky promised a downfall of rain, which speedily came. The next day more children and the old deaf and dumb woman died; over her little moan was made, but the lamentations over the children were terrible to hear, and on all sides mares were slaughtered. The abundance of meat, and the general confusion, combined with the rain to defeat Casimiro's anxious desire to proceed. The accumulation of miseries had rendered all the Indians gloomy and ill-humoured; and since our departure from Geylum we had had ample experience of the wretched side of Pampa life.

This district is always dreaded by the Indians, who assert that they invariably are attacked by a similar sickness when in it, notwithstanding that some considered it to have been occasioned by poison or deleterious drugs administered by our late neighbours. The marches had therefore been forced and prolonged, and the increased fatigue had doubtless aided the distemper in its fatal effects. Nearly half the children and several of the elder people died during our progress to Margunsho, and the utter misery and discomfort cannot be described. The rain had continually drenched us; the women, distracted with their endeavours to soothe the sick children, and their grief over the dead, could not attend to their domestic duties; our mantles were unmended, and proved but a poor shelter from the rain, no small misery in this climate, and the arrangements of the toldos were utterly devoid of their customary care and comfort. The usual good temper and cheerfulness of all had fled, and grief, sickness, and angry suspicion cast a gloom over every countenance.

5: Bourne T-5 (1849) 1874
SH5 Tehuelche SH5

treated as slaves, but made, in most respects, as comfortable in their servitude as the condition of their rude masters will admit. When, however, their lords are excited by gambling, or enraged for any or no cause, the fury of passion is visited upon their defenceless heads, which they bear uncomplainingly, with a meek submissiveness worthy of better treatment. They are passionately fond of trinkets and clumsy ornaments, such as bits of brass and copper, beads, and the like, which they wear suspended from their necks. A few of them had their ears pierced, and wore brass or copper ear-rings; and many of them decked out their children with similar rude finery which is valued more than anything else, except rum, tobacco and bread. The men paint or bedaub their faces and breasts with a kind of red earth. Charcoal is also used as a cosmetic. A broad line of red alternating with a stripe of black, in various fantastic figures, is a favorite style of decoration. The women make themselves, if possible, still more hideous, by the application of a pigment made of clay, blood and grease. Some of them would be very comely, if they were cleanly, and content to leave nature less strenuously adorned.

The people are as deficient in the morals as in the refinements and courtesies of domestic life; their licentiousness is equal to their cruelty,—the filth of their persons only too faithfully represents the degree in which "their mind and conscience is defiled." I saw no person, of either sex, that appeared to have attained advanced age, though it was difficult to judge of this. The oldest Indian I remember to have seen did not seem to be above sixty.

Their only wealth, aside from their huts, consists of